Prasar Bharati is a national entity. Its responsibilites are defined under Section 12 of the Act and these keep in view the requirements of the country as a whole.

Performance of DD News Channel

2198. SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that DD News, the 24 hours satellite news channel, has not been performing well and all set for a quiet close down;

(b) whether any official survey has indicated that the viewers average is very low as compared to Aaj Tak, Star News and BBC; and

(c) whether the top 10 producers of commissioned programmes on the channel received several crores of money for making programmes which had very poor viewership?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (c) As part of Doordarshan restructuring, Prasar Bharati Board has, in principle, taken a decision to close down Doordarshan News and Current Affairs Channel due to its high cost and low visibility. The Board also decided that Doordarshan National Channel, which has the highest reach covering over 70% of the population, will carry more programmes on news and current affairs to fulfil the mandate of public service broadcasting more effectively.

(b) No official survey has been conducted on performance of DD News Channel. However, viewership figures received from TAM Media Research for 27 cities shows that DD News has low viewership in comparison to Aaj Tak, Zee, Star News and BBC.

Issue of notices to advertising agencies for clearance of dues

2199. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prasar Bharati has recently issued legal notice to a large number of advertising agencies for recovery of about Rs. 85 crores;

(b) if so, the details of the amount due from these agencies, agency-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that no such notice has been issued to the National Film Development Corporation which owes over Rs. 20 crore;

(d) if so, the reasons therefore; and

(e) whether any guidelines have been laid down to ensure that fresh programmes or extension of programmes to advertising agencies are not allowed to be aired unless they clear their outstanding dues?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Details of the amount due to Doordarshan and AIR from these agencies are given in Statement-I and II respectively.

(c) and (d) Prasar Bharati has informed that there are outstandings against National Film Development Corporation but Doordarshan is also required to make payments to this organization. The accounts are therefore, being reconciled between the two organizations.

(e) Doordarshan is allowing fresh/extension of programmes to producers who have outstandings only (i) if a payment plan is in place and adhered to; and (ii) on advance payment.

As regards AIR, the accreditation status of the defaulting agencies is suspended temporarily and bookings accepted on advance payment till dues are cleared.

Statement-I

Details of legal notices issued to the defaulting agencies by Doordarshan

Sl. No.	Name of the Advertising Agency	Amount in Rupees
1	2	3
1.	M/s. Multichannel India Ltd.	258886121
2.	M/s. Numero Uno International Ltd.	161164797
3.	M/s. Fame Communications	133144135
4.	M/s. Market Movers	38845917
5.	M/s. Guruji Advertisers Pvt. Ltd.	37121420
6.	M/s. Advance T.V. Network	29401063
7.	M/s. Anand Advertising Agency	21036220

1	2	3
8.	M/s. Maa Communications Pvt. Ltd.	19868037
9.	M/s. Kinescope	19648256
10.	M/s. Multi Broadcasting Media	18799944
11.	M/s.Magic Box Productions Pvt. Ltd.	16557817
12.	M/s. TV, Today Network	15098756
13.	M/s. Universal Communications Pvt. Ltd.	10636614
14.	M/s. G. N. Communications	9761530
15.	M/s. Uranus Marketing Pvt. Ltd.	8447748
16.	M/s. Future Communications	6347954
17.	M/s. Corrum Communications Pvt. Ltd.	4825975
18.	M/s. Neerja Films	3261545
19.	M/s. Western Co-Op Bank	
	(i) Shree Madhav Poly Products	123000000
	(ii) Steller Communications	11100000
	(iii) Maya Entertainment	5814000
	TOTAL :	952767849
		(Rs. 95.28 Crores)

Statement -II

Details of legal notices issued to the defaulting agencies by All India Radio

Sl. No.	Name of the Advertising Agency	Amount (in Rupees)
1	2	3
1.	M/s. Suchandra Ad-Media	540667
2.	M/s. Renukay Advertising Company	5871853
3.	M/s. Maa Communications Bozel (P) Ltd.	941237
4.	M/s. Musireca Cassettes Incorporation	2873800
5.	M/s. Radio TV Commercials	885334
6.	M/s. Adair Advertising	733251

1	2	3
7.	M/s. Rayer Communications	1301523
8.	M/s. Shree Advertising	907472
9.	M/s. Shri Ragevendra Advertising	1892731
10.	M/s. V. R. G. Agencies	1340339
11.	M/s. Mantralaya Mahan Ads.	834734
12.	M/s. Noisy Recording	584574
	TOTAL :	18707515
		(1.87 Crores)

Financial assistance to Prasar Bharati

†2200. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in spite of setting up of Prasar Bharati as an autonomous body, Government have to provide financial assistance for this institution;

(b) if so, the financial assistance provided to this institution during the last five years; and

(c) the amount of financial assistance likely to be given in the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The accounting system of Prasar Bharati was separated from the accounts of Government of India *w.e.f.* 1.4. 2000 Prasar Bharati started receiving financial assistance from the Government in the form of grants-in-aid/loans from the financial year 2000-2001 onwards. The financial assistance given to Prasar Bharati during the financial year 2000-2001 was as follows:

(i) Grant-in-aid—Rs. 960.96 crores

(ii) Loan—Rs. 139.30 crores

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.